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Perrens' "Libertins," and Reusch's monumental history of the Index. The account of the English Deists presents a much more flattering portrait than that drawn by Mr. Leslie Stephen; and the attempt to vindicate the treatment of the clergy by the Convention is not altogether convincing. It is only fair to add, however, that the chapter on the *sæculum rationalisticum* contains a great deal of information. The closing section is devoted to a brief survey of the nineteenth century, to which the author hopes to return in a future work.

Mr. Robertson has taken great pains and has written a very serviceable book; had he made it less of a polemic, he would have given us a better history.

G. P. GOOCH.

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THE GOSPEL OF THE ATONEMENT. Hulsean Lectures for 1898-99. By the Ven. James M. Wilson, M.A., Archdeacon of Manchester, etc. London: Macmillan & Co. Pp. 165.

The purpose of this small volume is to press upon the notice of the dissatisfied but expectant Churchman, as also of the enlightened yet unconvinced religious inquirer, a view of the atonement which will deepen the appreciation of that doctrine for the former, and make possible to the latter a practical realization of its essential significance. This aim, which is thus in the main practical, circumscribes the plan of the work as well as its contents. Those who wish an elaborate discussion of the atonement will find this volume of no value. It is not a systematic treatment of the doctrine in any sense. The relations of the atonement to other doctrines are no more than barely indicated, while the difficulties involved in the view put forward are not so much removed as ignored. What it does present, and that with great clearness and force, is a general point of view from which this doctrine may be regarded, and in the light of which it comes to have reasonable definite significance and practical importance. While, therefore there is little doubt that the first class to whom the author seeks to appeal will find the lectures fruitful and suggestive to no slight degree, it is to be feared that the second will find their perplexity playing havoc with a half-attained conviction.

The atonement, as previously understood, was the sacrificial means by which the two alienated spirits—God and Man—were externally brought together and reconciled. This ex-

ternal view of the doctrine as a "transaction," with its implicated ideas of debt, ransom, sacrifice, and all that these involve, is entirely rejected by our author, who roundly designates such a representation of it as "Christian mythology" (p. 67). In the place of this he puts forward a view which he claims to be more in accordance with the attitude and the needs of our present religious experience. The fundamental factors which determine his view are (1) the insistence on the necessarily ethical content and function of all religious doctrine, and of the atonement in particular; (2) the claim that all doctrine must be verified by experience if it is to be accepted. The satisfaction of these alone will, he considers, meet the claims of the modern spirit. Since these two demands, however, are obviously directly connected, if not identical, we are not surprised to find that the importance of his own view lies in the stress laid upon the ethical significance and content imparted to the doctrine. He considers that the essential meaning of the atonement is found in the union of the Divine and Human, a union which all men share and can consciously experience (pp. 52, 53, 58, etc.), but which had its greatest historical expression in Christ. Hence Christ is the atonement in the sense and only in the sense, that by sharing his spirit, identifying ourselves with him, we consciously possess that union with God which he realized. If we take Christ as a "substitute," as a "propitiation," as a "sacrifice," as a "ransom," we turn the atonement into mere mythology (p. 60 ff.). By this simplification, the whole construction of mediæval and traditional Latin theology, with its formal precision and court-room distinctions, falls to pieces, and we are left with the naked facts,—a general but imperfect union of all men with God, a particular and complete union of Christ with God, and the gradual conscious identification of men with Christ, and through or by means of him with God. The atonement, in short, is simply the incarnation, the life and death of Christ on earth. This is the thesis of the volume, and is defended primarily by showing how it is supported by the statements of Christ and the apostles (from whom, however, no theory of the atonement can be derived, p. 39), and how it meets all the essential requirements of the traditional view.

We have only space here to mention a few of the many difficulties which this conception of the atonement raises. First of all, the "method," which the author, at least, professes to adopt in theology, shows a needlessly profound respect for and confidence

in the "inductive" method of procedure. The author seems to confuse agreement with experience, which is certainly the characteristic of truth in the widest sense, with the inductive process, which is merely one means of establishing that agreement. Surely, the results of deduction hold of experience as much as those of induction. Such a confusion leads him into somewhat extravagant forms of statement. He speaks of religions as "theories" (p. 25) resulting from observation of facts; religion is said to rest on a "hypothesis," which the holder proceeds to verify (pp. 22, 123-135), and the scientist is now to be rewarded for his years of patient and persistent image-breaking, by being received into the company of the image-makers as a "brother theologian" (p. 140). This is surely the mere baptismal consecration of science. Against the whole view here implied, it is safe to say that the natural and ordinary religious mind, *qua religious*, no more works with a "hypothesis," has a "theory" regarding the reality with which it is brought face to face, and with which it asserts and seeks to realize its oneness and harmony, than Adam had a theory of marriage when he first saw Eve. The author's case would have gained and not lost had he, instead of seeking to gain assent by claiming conformity with the methods pursued by the experimental sciences, emphasized the principle, long ago enunciated by Aristotle, that the kind of certainty to be attained in a given inquiry and the method of attaining it depend upon the matter in hand, and are not the same for all the sciences.

But, again, when we ask how the author's doctrine is to be really established, we are met by another perplexing confusion. His view is expressed in such a way as to leave the nature of the relation subsisting between the general fact of actual union between man and God, between divine and human, and that union as found in the life and death of Christ, quite undecided and obscure. At one time, the difference between the two is described as one of "degree" only (pp. 94, 120), the divine life in man appearing as the "voice of duty," the call to "self-sacrifice" (pp. 106-108, 122). At another time it seems to be maintained that there is only one union of divine and human, that of Christ, from and by means of whom man discovered and realized his union with God (pp. 94, etc.); and apart from whom man would never have known it (p. 112). In this latter case, Christ awakens this union into living consciousness (pp. 112, 122), and is therefore the atonement (p. 94). It is quite obvious that these two views are by no means the same. In

the former case Christ is merely the type of the union, of which all men are actually and always more or less incomplete instances; in the latter case Christ is the mediator, who makes possible any vital union with God at all. The confusion between these two views runs through the volume from first to last. When the author deals with the former, he speaks of the fundamental importance of self-sacrifice as the base and pinnacle of a truly religious life (pp. 107, 108); when he has in view the latter, he lays emphasis in the usual way on the death of Christ (pp. 105, 106, 109). Partly, no doubt, these views may seem to imply each other. But our point is that they are essentially exclusive of one another. The suffering and death of Christ were doubtless self-sacrifice; but self-sacrifice as such, as it is and can be experienced and undergone by human beings in general, does not involve the death of Christ. And, further, if self-sacrifice and obedience to conscience are the foundation of an ethico-religious life, it surely follows that, since Christ's life is no more than at best the type of such a life, the progress in that life will gradually tend to the elimination of the influence of Christ, to the personal possession of the principle instead of looking to him as the example. But if Christ is the mediator of man's union with God, then clearly he will be indispensable to the genuinely religious life from beginning to end. In the one case, he is valuable and important to the religious life, but not really essential; in the other, he is both important and absolutely necessary. No amount of verbal legerdemain therefore will ever make the two entirely synonymous. Of course, it is easy to point out a difficulty of this sort, which, indeed, is as old as Christianity itself. None the less, it is disappointing to find in a volume which ostensibly professes to face this difficulty, and unquestionably leans towards one side (the former view) without entirely abandoning the other, that we cannot obtain an unambiguous and unhesitating practical or theoretical solution of the problem.

Finally, we must ask how the author's general doctrine is to stand related to other aspects of Christian experience. It might at first sight seem true that general recognition of the divine life in all men, the union of man as man with God, would heal differences among Christians of all shades (p. 142); it might hasten the attainment of peace and charity; it might obliterate such distinctions as those between secular and religious, material and spiritual. But even were this the result, it is extremely doubtful if it would be desirable. The author must surely be aware that the belief that

differences matter little becomes transformed very easily into the conviction that differences matter nothing at all,—a position which renders futile all judgments of value whatever.

A similar objection holds good against the author's identification of the atonement with the incarnation, and his apparent attempt to make it the leading principle of all other doctrines of theology. No doubt he is quite justified in insisting upon that inner unity of connection which makes it possible to find all the essential doctrines of Christianity implicated in any one of them. Each is the limited and approximate expression of the single but many-sided concrete fact of a religious life after the manner of Christ. But the unity and individuality of the fact described does not imply the identification of the ways and aspects from which it may be regarded. Hence it seems quite illegitimate to identify the atonement with the incarnation; nothing is gained by such a process, and a somewhat useful and important distinction is lost,—the distinction, namely, between the union of man's spirit with God's on the one side, and the union of matter and spirit on the other.

However, most of these objections the author might have obviated had he in this most opportune volume been less eager to win an immediate assent to his doctrine and more careful to secure its truth. He would thereby have performed a much needed service for the church. For if, as the author says, "the weakness of the church is the poverty of its popular theology," there is little doubt that the weakness of its theology is the poverty of its popular metaphysics.

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THE PHILOSOPHICAL THEORY OF THE STATE. By Bernard Bosanquet. London: Macmillan & Co., 1899. Pp. xi., 334.

"The present work," says Mr. Bosanquet, "is an attempt to express what I take to be the fundamental ideas of a true social philosophy. I have criticized and interpreted the doctrines of certain well-known thinkers only with the view of setting these ideas in the clearest light. This is the whole purpose of the book; and I have intentionally abstained from practical applications, except by way of illustration." These "fundamental ideas," as our author himself is careful to warn us, are by no means unfamiliar to the student of Hegel and Gréen, but their presentation by Mr. Bosanquet is always fresh and stimulating, and he has often suc-